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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to ascertain the continuing education needs of men and women leisure service professionals in Wisconsin and to identify differences caused by gender. (Leisure service professionals were defined as persons employed full-time in administering, directing, leading, organizing, and planning in leisure service organizations.) A questionnaire was mailed to 1,646 Wisconsin professionals regarding their characteristics, continuing education needs and interests, and attitudes toward continuing education, with a 50 percent response rate. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics, analysis of variance, and tests of homogeneity. It was found that male recreation professionals' salaries were an average of almost $6,000 more than those of females. In general, attitudes toward continuing education were similar in males and females, although women tended to view continuing education in a slightly more positive light. Men had high continuing education needs in public relations, budgeting techniques, program evaluation, supervising staff, and long range planning. Women said they needed information on innovative programming, programming for special groups, activity analysis, current issues, and program evaluation. No significant differences in needs between women and men were found in staff training, time management, public speaking, and interpersonal communications. It was recommended that since no major differences by gender were found, opportunities for continuing education should be made available to all personnel, with particular emphasis on removing barriers or deterrents to women. (KC)

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"CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR MEN AND WOMEN IN LEISURE SERVICES"

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ABSTRACT

"CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR MEN AND WOMEN IN LEISURE SERVICES"

The purpose of the study was to ascertain the continuing education needs of men and women leisure service professionals in Wisconsin and to identify the differences due to gender. Leisure service professionals were defined as persons employed full-time in administering, directing, leading, organizing, and planning in leisure service organizations.

A mail questionnaire was developed to obtain data from 1,646 Wisconsin professionals regarding their characteristics, continuing education needs and interests, and attitudes toward continuing education. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, analysis of variance, and tests of homogeneity.

The 50% response rate was comprised of 43% (349) women and 57% (436) men. Of the total response, 19% (60) of the administrators, 68% (190) of the supervisors, and 54% (81) of the leaders were women. The average salary for women was $11,413 compared to $17,262 for men.

In general, the attitudes toward continuing professional education were similar. However, women tended to view continuing education in a slightly more positive light.

Men had high continuing education needs in public relations, budgeting techniques, program evaluation, supervising staff, and long range planning. Women said they needed information on innovative programming, programming for special groups, activity analysis, current issues, and program evaluation. No significant difference in needs between women and men were found in staff training, time management, public speaking, and interpersonal communications.

The images and traditions associated with the recreation and leisure profession can have a profound effect on new professionals and may ultimately affect the success of these professionals. In the past, racial, ethnic, and gender roles have always been crucial to acquiring and performing occupational roles. Yet, the changes in traditions and images which have helped break down ethnic and racial barriers, have not always had the same effect on the gender barriers (Epstein, 1971). Researchers in leisure services have challenged the traditional role and status of women professionals, and have questioned whether attitudes and professional needs are the same for men and women (Theobald 1978; Theobald 1976; Kerr 1975; Dunn 1977).

In the fall of 1979 a study was conducted by the Recreation Resources Center of the University of Wisconsin-Extension to determine the professional continuing education needs of women and men who were employed full-time in public or quasi-public leisure services in Wisconsin. This study included professionals employed in such areas as therapeutic recreation, park management, youth serving agencies, municipal and school recreation, camping, and outdoor education.

The specific objectives of the study were:

1. To determine demographic and descriptive data regarding individuals in leisure services;
2. To ascertain present continuing education needs, interests, and experiences and further educational opportunities and methods which would be helpful for better performance of professional duties;
3. To determine attitudes toward professional continuing education in leisure services.

The research hypothesis for the study stated that there were no statistically significant differences in characteristics, needs, and attitudes between women and men employed in leisure services.

Review of Literature

No literature was found related directly to a comparison of continuing education needs and attitudes of women and men in leisure services. However, literature was available regarding certain demographic characteristics of men and women in leisure services as well as the general work force.

In professions where men have dominated, being female has usually meant being unlike the traditional image, and therefore unsuitable. Two processes assume this will happen: sex-typing and status-set typing. Both processes set cultural expectations. Occupations are considered "sex-typed" when a large majority are one sex and when there is an associated normative expectation that this is as it should be. Epstein (1971: 153) believes that all professions in the U.S. society are sex-typed. This sex-role association in turn affects jobs. For example, nursing, social work, and elementary teaching are "expressive and person-oriented" (Epstein 1971). Therefore, traditionally these jobs have been classified as female occupations.

> Although occupational differences may in some cases be a proxy for differences in qualifications (for example, physical strength), it seems much more likely that they are the symtoms of deeply ingrained cultural attitudes about the capabilities of women--attitudes which may affect the aspirations and job search of women as well as the hiring practices of employers (Sawhill 1973).

This cultural attitude toward "women's work" can be detrimental to any woman who chances this "unfeminine" role to pursue a desired career.

The numbers of women in the work force has experienced increases during the past several decades. "By mid-1977, 40 million women were in the labor force--about 41% of the country's entire labor force and 49% of all women 16 years of age and over" (U.S. Department of Labor 1977: 1). Dunn, in her

1977 study, found a decline of women in the percentage of full-time year round recreation employees in the U.S. between 1928 and 1975. In fact, women comprised only 17% of the full-time professionals in leisure services in 1975 compared to 49% in 1928. Thus, the data indicated the percentage of women in recreation and parks did not parallel the percentage of women in the labor force (Dunn 1977: 24).

Some may speculate that the decline would indicate fewer women being trained for a career in leisure services. The 1978 National Recreation and Park Association figures on college enrollment in park and recreation majors does not support this idea. The numbers of women have been constantly increasing; over 50% (12,895) of the students in 1978 were women preparing for a career in leisure services. This was almost three times the number of women enrolled in 1971. At the Master's level, slightly less than 50% of all persons enrolled in park and recreation curriculums were women (Society of Parks and Recreation Educators, 1978).

In previous studies, characteristics of professionals such as education, personnel categories, and salaries have been analyzed. Theobald (1978) found that while there was no significant difference in education levels between women and men in leisure services, other discrepancies were obvious: 1) 2.5 males employed for each full-time female, 2) women earned $1,300 less than males at entry level positions, 3) the male/female salary ratio increased with higher salary levels, and 4) there were 66% more male administrators than female administrators.

Kerr (1975) supported Theobald's findings. She found that: 1) males dominated the leisure service work force 2:1, 2) only 15% of the women were administrators and earned $1,717 less than male administrators, and 3) women

averaged one year less of education and experience than men. A similar study of women in public recreation showed that 85% of those employed in recreation were men with 44% of the supervisory and leadership positions held by women. Only 10% of the administrative positions were filled by women (Dunn 1977).

These recreation research findings were quite similar to the general employment figures. Nationwide, women also experience an earnings gap. "Women who worked at year round, full-time jobs in 1977 earned only 59¢ for every dollar earned by men" (U.S. Department of Labor 1979: 1). The earnings for year round, full-time entertainment and recreation workers in 1977 were slightly higher; women earned 69¢ to every male dollar with the median wage for women at $8,127 compared to $12,161 for men (U.S. Department of Labor 1979: 13).

Education differences were also experienced at the national level.

> In 1977 women with 4 years of college had lower incomes than men who had completed only the 8th grade--educational attainment data further suggests that women needed more education than men to reach the middle to upper income categories (U.S. Department of Labor 1979: 13).

Data indicated that women were willing to acquire added education. The proportion of women with 4 years or more of college has almost doubled since 1952 (U.S. Department of Labor 1977). Yet, education and experience do not completely overcome equality barriers. Blau stated:

> After controlling for education, experience, and other factors that might tend to cause productivity differences between men and women, the proportion of the sex differential attributed to pure discrimination has been estimated at between 29% and 43% of male earnings (Blau 1979).

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to determine the professional continuing education needs and interests of full-time employees in leisure services in Wisconsin and to identify the differences (if any) between men and women employed in leisure services. While the results were not generalized to all leisure service professionals, the findings may be helpful and enlightening to other interested professionals and to leisure service professionals in other states.

To collect the data, a questionnaire was designed and organized into sections. The first section elicited professional descriptive information, such as age, sex, education, years of experience, interest in pursuing a degree, type of leisure service agencies and job title.

The second section ascertained the professional continuing education needs and interests. Fifty needs and interests were initially identified by experts in leisure services and from other studies. These needs were rated by the respondents on a Likert Scale with 1 equal to no need to 4 equal to high need.

Methods of continuing education were addressed in the third section. Respondents indicated the amount of participation in selected continuing education activities for 1979 and the anticipated participation for 1980. In this section questions were also asked about professional association memberships, the amount and type of professional reading, and the preferred times for offering continuing education activities.

The fourth section ascertained the continuing education attitudes of leisure service professionals. Each statement was rated by the respondents on a Likert Scale.

A list of all full-time professionals in leisure services identified 1,646 professionals in Wisconsin. This list was developed by contacting leisure service associations, institutions, and groups of agencies from across the state. All identified professionals were sampled and received a questionnaire. Where necessary, non-respondents were sent a reminder postcard, and if needed, a second questionnaire.

Frequencies, chi-squares analysis of variance, Cochrans-Bartlett test for homogeneity, and the Mann-Whitney-Wilcox non-parametric tests were used. Statistical significance was accepted at the $p<.05$ level. Since the power was affected by the large sample size, an eta square measurement was computed to provide meaningfulness of the significance. As accepted in social sciences, an η^2 above 10% was accepted as being meaningful (Cohen 1977). Any unanswered questions were coded as missing data and were not considered in the analysis.

Of the 1,646 professionals surveyed, 830 (50.4%) returned the questionnaire, 42 responses were unuseable due to mail damage, duplication or not being employed full-time.

Results

Descriptive Professional Data

Frequency data indicated that 349 (43.4%) of the leisure service professionals in the study were women, and 436 (56.6%) were men.

The five major types of employment agencies for leisure service professionals can be found in Table 1. As shown, only 1 out of 4 federal/state leisure service employees or municipal/school recreation employees were women. Non-profit agencies had equal employment of women and men, while 1 out of 4 employees in private or combination agencies were men. Of the women employed,

only 9.6% and 10.5% worked in municipal/school or federal/state agencies, respectively. The chi-squared statistic was significant in the comparision of type of agency by gender. The η^2 showed gender and type of agency accounted for 10.6% of the variance. Therefore, a significant difference existed between types of agencies where men and women leisure service professionals were employed with women more likely to be employed in non-profit or private agencies.

TABLE 1

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN AND MEN EMPLOYED IN MAJOR WISCONSIN LEISURE SERVICE AGENCIES

Type of Agency	Number	Female	Male
Federal/State	147	24.5%	75.0%
County/County-city	79	38.0%	62.0%
Municipal/School	141	23.4%	76.6%
Non-Profit Organizations	265	50.9%	49.1%
Private, Combinations, Other	145	75.9%	24.1%

$\chi^2_{df=4}=112.9$ $p<.05$

The major leisure service areas are illustrated in Table 2. The percentages showed that 97.6% of the park professionals were men, while the more traditional female fields of therapeutic and older adults had only 33.6% and 6.3% men, respectively. The chi-squares of these two variables had significance, but the η^2 showed no meaningful difference between gender and leisure service areas.

TABLE 2

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN AND MEN EMPLOYED IN WISCONSIN LEISURE SERVICE AREAS

Leisure Service Area	Number	Female	Male
Parks and Outdoor Recreation	127	2.4%	97.6%
Community, School Recreation	124	30.6%	69.4%
Therapeutic Recreation	122	66.4%	33.6%
Older Adult Leisure Services	143	93.7%	6.3%
Camping	51	45.1%	54.9%
Outdoor Education	35	31.4%	68.6%
Voluntary and Youth Agencies	106	36.8%	63.2%
Other (church, industrial, etc.)	57	19.3%	80.7%

$\chi^2_{df=7}=284.5$ $p<.05$

Job titles were divided into the three categories traditionally used in leisure services: administrators, supervisors, and leaders. Men held 80.9% of the administrative positions, 31.2% of the supervisory jobs, and 45.1% of the leaders positions. Of all men employed in leisure services, 16.9% were in leadership positions while 62.1% were in administrative positions. The chi-square was significant and showed a meaningful difference with an η^2 of 11.7%. Thus, a significant difference existed between the job titles held by men and women with males far outnumbering females in administrative positions.

Other descriptive data included the following:

- Men on the average had been in their present position 6.1 years compared to women's 4.0 years.
- Women on the average had been involved in leisure services for 5 years as compared to 10 years for men.
- Men supervised approximately four times more full-time and part-time employees than women.

- Women supervised more volunteers with a median of 6 compared to .5 for men.
- The last year of formal coursework was 1974 for women and 1971 for men.
- No difference in the levels of education was found between men and women.
- 34% and 28% of the women and men respectively wanted to pursue a further degree.
- The average woman employed in leisure services was 34 years old while the average man was 37.
- The average salary for men was $17,626 compared to $11,413.

Analyses were conducted to determine what factors were attributed to the great difference in salaries. An analysis of variance using gender, salary, and job titles was significant with the η^2 on gender accounting for 13% of the variance and the multiple R^2 for the entire analysis at .235. The salaries by job titles were:

Administrators:	$18,315 (men)	$13,083 (women)
Supervisors :	$16,223 (men)	$ 9,670 (women)
Leaders :	$16,109 (men)	$14,335 (women)

Another variable thought to influence wages was the highest level of education attained by professionals. An analysis of variance using gender, salary and education was statistically significant with much associated meaning. A woman with completed post-graduate work earned $2,174 less than a man with a high school degree. Post-graduate women averaged $13,412 compared to the male high school graduate who earned $15,587. The male post-graduate counterpart earned $22,691. The η^2 was 15% for gender and 9% for the level of education. The multiple R^2 for the entire analysis was .286.

Salaries were believed to reflect the length of time employed in a position. The variables of sex, salary, and years in the position were used in an

analysis of variance. The analysis was significant with 14% of the variance explained by gender and 12% of the variance explained by the years in the position. The multiple R^2 was .312. In 1979, the first male earned $3,395 more than the first year female. The greatest difference in earning power between men and women over a 20 year span occurred at the ninth year where women earned only $10,360 compared to $22,357 earned by men.

Professional Needs and Interests

Fifty needs and interests were rated by the respondents on a Likert Scale with 1 equal to no need and 4 equal to high need. The 10 highest overall needs for women and men can be found in Tables 3 and 4 respectively. Women ranked continuing education needs and interests higher on the Likert Scale then did men. Women's needs were more program oriented, possibly reflecting their job roles as supervisors and leaders, while men expressed more administrative needs.

TABLE 3

TEN HIGHEST CONTINUING EDUCATION NEEDS AND INTERESTS FOR FEMALE PROFESSIONALS

Need	Mean*
Innovative Programming Aids	3.34
Program Ideas for Special Groups	3.26
Activity Analysis	3.20
Current Issues	3.18
Program Evaluation	3.13
Special Events Programming	3.05
Leadership Techniques	3.03
Public Relations	3.03
Social Programming	2.99
Working With Volunteers	2.99

*Mean based upon a 4 point Likert Scale where 4.0 shows high need.

TABLE 4

TEN HIGHEST CONTINUING EDUCATION NEEDS AND INTERESTS FOR MALE PROFESSIONALS

Need	Mean*
Public Relations	3.09
Budgeting Techniques	3.00
Program Evaluation	3.00
Supervising Staff	2.99
Long Range Planning	2.97
Training Staff	2.97
Evaluating Personnel	2.97
Revenue Sources	2.96
Innovative Programming Aids	2.94
Leadership Techniques	2.93

*Mean based upon a 4 point Likert Scale where 4.0 shows high need.

The Cochrans-Bartlett test for homogeneity showed no homogeneity in some instances when the needs of men and women were compared. An η^2 was used to measure the meaning of the Mann-Whitney-Wilcox test in the non-homogeneous areas. The η^2 indicated meaningful differences in needs for programs of more interest to men in: accounting, feasibility studies, budgeting techniques and management techniques. Women showed greatest need for leisure counseling and assertiveness training.

Significant differences were also found in needs where gender was homogeneous. The greatest differences between the sexes were in maintenance operations, natural resource management, land acquisition and use, computer managed systems and marketing techniques; these topics were of more interest to men. Activity analysis, current issues, programming areas, leisure education and working with volunteers were of greater interest to women.

Several needs and interests were expressed by all professionals, regardless of gender. These needs included staff training, time management, public relations, interpersonal communications, public speaking, leadership techniques, writing skills, needs assessments, and current research.

Continuing Education Methods

The professionals were given a list of twelve continuing education activities commonly available. When analyzed in terms of response by men and women, no meaningful significance was found. In 1979 the average woman professional participated in programs for 1.5 continuing education units (CEU), read 2.4 professional books, and attended state conferences (1.5), local conferences (2.5), in-service trainings (3.4), and professional meetings (1.5). The average male professional read 2.2 professional books, attended national conferences (1.2), state conferences (2.3), local conferences (2.1), in-service trainings (2.0), and professional meetings (1.6). Males were more involved in professional associations such as National Recreation and Park Association, Wisconsin Park and Recreation Association, and had significantly higher readings of Park and Recreation and Journal of Leisure Research.

The deterrents to participation by professionals in continuing education activities were not affected by gender. Overall, professionals indicated that schedule conflicts, cost, not enough time, distance or transportation, lack of information and home responsibilities were the greatest deterrents regardless of gender.

The respondents indicated the financial benefits for professional continuing education that were provided by their employers. No meaningful differences were found between the sexes. Over 50% of all professionals received tuition or registration reimbursement, time-off, and money for travel expenses.

Attitudes Toward Continuing Education

Attitudes toward professional continuing education were very similar between sexes. The majority of women and men felt that continuing education should be required for membership in professional associations. More than 50% of the women felt that salary raises should be based in part on continuing education participation, while the men were equally divided on this question. Women had a slightly higher belief and commitment to continuing education than did men. All professionals felt that continuing education helped to improve their professional service and kept them abreast of professional developments but did little to help in professional advancement. None of the differences between men and women were statistically meaningful.

Conclusions

Comparison of data to previous research confirmed some of the prior information, but also provided new findings which require further study. A data base on the professional continuing education needs and attitudes of men and women in leisure services in Wisconsin is now available. More research is needed to confirm or disprove the substantial range in needs of men and women and the similarities in their attitudes toward continuing education.

The proportion of females employed in leisure services in Wisconsin (43.4%) was very close to the 1977 percentage of women found in the entire work force (41%) and higher than the percentage found by Dunn (17%). While Theobald and Kerr found respectively, that 2.5 and 2.0 males were employed full-time to each female, the ratio for this study was 1.2 males for every female. The results of this research confirmed Dunn's and Kerr's findings in regard to administrative positions: 19% of the women in this study were in administrative positions and earned $5,232 less than male administrators.

In 1977, women in the full-time labor force earned 59¢ for every $1 paid to men; nationally for entertainment and recreation workers, women earned 69¢ to every male dollar. In this study women earned 65¢ to every $1 paid to men. Theobald's finding which indicated first year females earned less than their male counterparts were also confirmed: first year women in a Wisconsin leisure service earned $3,395 less than a first year male. Controlling for education produced similar disproportionate results.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations should be considered:

1. Leisure service agencies should evaluate the status of their professionals to insure that women are given equal opportunities for advancement, responsibilities, and experiences, and that salaries are not reflective of gender.

2. Professional training in various leisure services should help overcome traditional images and sex-typing associated with their areas to ensure that all professionals are free to pursue their desired careers.

3. Presently some needs and interests are more important to men or women. Professional continuing education planners should be aware of this, but must also realize that these needs may be associated with a certain gender due to sex-typing, and traditional images within a leisure service area. Thus, over time more of these continuing education needs may become non-distinctive by gender.

4. Since no major differences by gender were found in methods for continuing education, opportunities should be planned for all with consideration given to overall major deterrents.

5. No major differences in attitudes were discerned between men and women.

6. Women in academic and professional fields must continue to strive for greater authority, influence, and responsibility which will lead to equality in the leisure service profession.

Leisure service organizations are dynamic institutions; they must constantly respond to the changes which occur in society as well as the profession. As more women enter leisure service, barriers to careers in "non-female" areas and to administrative opportunities must be eliminated. With leisure services assuming new directions, it is imperative that all professionals are given opportunities to participate in professional continuing education activities. As the leisure service profession purports concern for equality and personal growth for participants in leisure programs, the profession must also extend this concern to all its professionals.

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